

Messenger

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Summer harvest



Dr Richard de Lisser reports on evangelism across the South England Conference



Summer brings with it renewed energy and a zest for life; with longer days and shorter nights there is a feeling in the air that much can be accomplished. In the life of the Church, summertime brings with it evangelistic activities and accomplishments. With over 200 new members being added to the Church

through baptism for the months of April to July and hundreds more being contacted daily, the work of the Church goes on relentlessly as others are thinking of holidays, rest and respite.

At the Cornerstone church in Eastbourne an Asian couple who had studied with Pastor Alan Hart were baptised at a service held at the Polegate church and joyfully received into fellowship. Through the leadership of Pastor Hart the Cornerstone, Polegate and Hastings churches are engaged in field evangelism, conducting community surveys leading

to community events, distributing Bible study cards and establishing a community outreach choir, breaking down barriers through the power of gospel music.

In Great Yarmouth, Thetford and Lowestoft, Pastor Michael Walker continues to conduct an evangelistic seminar which has attracted great interest. One lady who had not been to church for fifty years (since she was a little girl) stated that these meetings have awakened her interest in the Bible.

In Northolt Pastor Everett Picart has led his group in conducting a community survey which has yielded fifteen postal Bible study requests and four regular home Bible studies. In addition to this, the community survey has uncovered a family/parenting and youth need in the area that the Northolt group is endeavouring to meet. In Southall, Pastor Picart reports that a witnessing programme organised by the Youth & Teens department took place during Sabbath School time, with more than a dozen young people attending to share their faith, witnessing to the local people in the park, in the streets and near the entrance of the busy market place.

In Plumstead, Pastor Simon Esson reports that six people were added to the church through baptism as the churches gear up to celebrate twenty-five years of community involvement through a series of meetings from 22-24 August in which they will honour community champions.

In Hope Community, Pastor

Fergus Owusu-Boateng reports that while many may have been celebrating Midsummer's Day on 21 June, the Beckenham Hope Community church was engaged in celebrations of a heavenly kind. Four precious souls were about to demonstrate publicly their decision to walk with the Lord through baptism, and another was given the right hand of fellowship. Pastor Owusu-Boateng also reports that following a successful evangelistic campaign held at the Lee Valley church by international evangelist, Dr Paul Adu Sampah, twenty-four members were added to the church through baptism.

After five weeks of evangelistic meetings held in the Tottenham West Green Road and Edmonton Central churches, Pastor Burnett reports that twenty-five new members were added to the church through baptism. This number swells to thirty-two if we included the seven baptised in March following a youth campaign conducted by Pastor Steve Riley from Trinidad.

In Lewisham, following a successful evangelistic campaign held by Pastor Kirk Thomas, Pastor James Phillip reports that eighteen new members were added to the church through baptism.

The summer is not yet over and the harvest continues.

See further reports on page 4.

Patricia Douglas is commissioned

by Pastor Fred Mapp

Sabbath afternoon 14 June marked the occasion of the first commissioning service anywhere in the British Union, as Mrs Patricia Douglas was commissioned by the North England Conference into the Gospel ministry. Family, relatives, friends, well-wishers and supporters

joined Camp Meeting attendees at Pontin's Holiday Centre, Ainsdale, Southport, to witness this unprecedented event and to compliment the trailblazing Mrs Douglas.

Born into a loving home, Patricia spent her formative years in the Wolverhampton district of churches,

was baptised aged 13 at a Camp Meeting by the late Pastor Terry Joshua, and later served a two-year life-changing stint as a student missionary in Majuro.

In September 1994, Patricia commenced five years of preparation for the Gospel ministry at Newbold College and left in 1999, having successfully completed a BA in Pastoral Studies and an MA in Religious Studies. She also married fellow student, the charming Carlton Douglas, during this period.

Patricia gained valuable practical ministerial experience serving in the Nottingham district of churches under Pastors Curtis Murphy and Laurence Johnson, and in the Leicester district of churches with Pastor Victor Harewood, before being given sole charge of the Walsall district of churches. Patricia now combines motherhood with part-time care of the Walsall congregation.

In his sermon Pastor Alan Hodges drew insights from the female associates-in-ministry of the apostle Paul to challenge and encourage Patricia to give of her best in service to God, and to assure her of the support of her brothers and sisters.

Following the ordination prayer by Camp Meeting commitment



Patricia responds to the charge given by Pastor McFarlane

speaker Pastor Ron Smith, the charge, given by Pastor Don McFarlane, president of the British Union Conference, and the welcome into pastoral ministry by Pastor Frederick Mapp, North England Ministerial Association secretary, Patricia responded by giving thanks to Almighty God, to her family, and to all the individuals who had influenced her development and impacted her ministry.

The North England Conference wishes Pastor Douglas every blessing in her ministry.



Patricia and her husband Carlton



Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald RGN, RM, RHV, MSc,
Health Ministries director, BUC

Brain Health Series

Part 9a

EMOTIONAL IMPACT

This segment of the brain health series explores the emotional aspects relating to brain health. This will include internal stimuli such as thought patterns and brain chemistry, and external influences such as social influences and environmental factors. We will also examine the role of trauma and certain medication in relation to their connection to emotional wellness. Food and mood will also be analysed in relation to their nutritional impact on emotional well-being.

General overview

Brain chemistry

Science is currently able to assess the biological

effects of the nervous system and chemical elements associated with emotional wellness.

One such area examined is that of anxiety disorders.

Researchers at the University of Manchester's Faculty of Medical

and Health Sciences are studying the relationship between the biology of the nervous system, anxiety symptoms and behavioural problems. In particular, they have progressed studies in the area of a condition called *generalised anxiety disorder* (GAD) which relates to excessive worrying. Research outcomes identified in *Science Daily* (30 March 2005) found that anxiety disorders like GAD are due to changes in the activity of the brain circuits which deal with anxiety. The research indicates that abnormalities in brain serotonin (the neurotransmitter which regulates mood, emotion, sleep and appetite) influence these emotion circuits. Therefore they are better able to target anti-anxiety treatment options in susceptible individuals.

Social impact, trauma and psychological influences

Following the aftermath of the Waco tragedy, Dr Perry has been working with the children that David Koresh allowed to leave the compound.

He has progressed work to help them deal with the catastrophic raid that ended the life of those remaining at the ranch.

Studying the behaviours of these children and analysing their accounts has enabled Dr Perry to learn more about the power of human groups to influence behaviour. Equally informative was how brain chemistry works in these traumatic circumstances.

Mood and food

The nutritional aspect of food has also been found to affect mood. For example: A UK study by Benton and Cook (providing similar results to several other studies) demonstrates an association between low selenium intake and a significantly greater incidence of depression and other negative mood states. Additionally, several studies report changes in eating patterns when individuals are stressed.

In forthcoming issues we further explore the above and related issues, including treatment options, spiritual guidance and self-help techniques for emotional healing.

Good health!



Coming to grips with God's love

David Marshall

Remember the Peanuts cartoons – Snoopy, Lucy and Charlie Brown?

In one strip Lucy challenges Charlie Brown: 'You know what I don't understand? I don't understand love!' CB says, 'Who does?' Lucy is threatening: 'Explain love to me, Charlie Brown!' CB: 'You can't explain love. I can recommend a book or a poem or a painting, but I can't explain love.' Lucy: 'Well, try, Charlie Brown. For goodness sake TRY!'

CB: 'Let's say I see this cute little girl go by . . .' That's as far as he gets before Lucy interrupts: 'Why must she be cute? Huh? Why can't someone fall in love with someone with freckles and a big nose? Explain THAT!' CB: 'OK. Let's start again. I see this girl walk by with this great big nose . . .' That's when Lucy snaps: 'I didn't say GREAT BIG NOSE.'

CB sighs and shrugs: 'You not only can't explain love. You can't even talk about it.'

If we can't talk about it, let alone explain it, let's see if we can pick up a hint or two from a story first told by Dale Galloway.

Chad was a shy, quiet little lad, small for his age. He was the only child of a single mother. Three weeks before Valentine's Day he came home from school and told Mum that he wanted to make a valentine card for everyone in his class.

Mum's heart sank. She thought, 'I wish he wouldn't do that!' She had watched the children walking home from school. They laughed, had their arms round one another's shoulders – while Chad walked behind, on his own, not included. Nevertheless, she decided to go along with Chad's plan. She bought coloured card, glue and crayons. Night after night for three weeks, Chad painstakingly made thirty-seven valentine cards.

Valentine's Day dawned and Chad was beside himself with excitement! Carefully he counted the cards, stacked them in a box – and ran to school as fast as he could.

Chad had a liking for chocolate buns, so Mum baked him lots of them for when he came home from school. He would be crushed, she knew, when he received few – if any – valentines.

At 4pm the school bell sounded. The

children left in the usual way, laughing and having the best of times. As usual Chad was left behind, though he seemed to be walking a bit faster than usual. She expected him to burst through the door in floods of tears. His arms were empty. He had received no cards.

'I've made you chocolate buns! Your favourite!' she said as Chad entered.

He didn't seem to hear her and marched right past, face shining and saying, 'Not a one . . . not a one.'

Tears bubbled in her own eyes.

And then Chad added: 'I didn't forget a one, not a single one!'

Loving was giving, for Chad. Giving and giving inclusively was his priority.

F. W. Faber wrote that 'the love of God is broader than the measures of man's mind'. And that's a great truth; but Chad wanted to get there.

Jesus did not come to make God's love possible, but to make God's love visible. His primary aim was not for us finally to submit to the power of God. It was that we should finally surrender to the love of God. It is not that our will is crushed, but that our heart is broken.

'God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.' Romans 5:8.

That dazzles me like a sudden dawn. God's love has done everything we could need, everything we shall need. That verse makes no sense unless we accept Jesus as the 'enfleshment' (incarnation) of God. God didn't say, 'You're in a mess! I'll send somebody to help.' He said: 'You're in a mess. I'm coming down.' The death of Jesus demonstrates the height/depth/breadth of the love of God 'because the Messiah is the fully human being (how much more human can you get than being crucified?) in whom the living God is fully present'.²

And God didn't come down to save good people, but to save sinners, not to save his friends, but to save his enemies.

Some men may be prepared to die for a good person or in a good cause or for a great and good principle. The wonder of the Gospel is that Christ died for us when we were still sinners, outcasts, pig-pen

prodigals, beyond the pale. Love can go no further than that.

To the prodigal daughter who turned up at the feast of Simon the Pharisee Jesus said, 'Your sins are forgiven. . . . Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'³ To Simon Jesus explained, 'I tell you her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.'⁴

The woman was not forgiven because she loved. She loved because she was forgiven.

You don't go up to people and say, 'Do this, do that, and God will be reconciled to you.' The Gospel is, 'God is already reconciled to you. Why don't you be reconciled to him?'

All other religions say, 'Clean up your act and come to God.' Christianity says, 'Come as you are. Only God can clean up your act.' That is the message of Romans 5. 'For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!' (Verse 10.)

God's great love does not impose itself on anyone. It has to be discovered and welcomed. Once discovered and welcomed, it is received. Once received it is shared. And to share in God's love is life-transforming.

There is a love whose measure is an umbrella.

There is a love whose extent is the biggest marquee you can think of.

There is a love as vast as the immeasurable sky.

The New Testament's aim is to convert the umbrella into a tent. More than that: it is to merge the tent into the glorious canopy of the all-enfolding heavens.

Push back the walls of the family until they include your neighbour.

Push back further until the walls include the stranger.

Push further until the walls include the foe.

That is the love God modelled in Christ.

References:

¹My dodgy recollection of a Peanuts cartoon strip by the late great Charles Schultz. ²Tom Wright, *Paul for Everyone: Romans Part 1* (SPCK, 2004), page 86. ³Luke 7:48, 50. ⁴Luke 7:47.

Lee Valley: 24 baptised

by Pastor Fergus Owusu-Boateng

It was not only a glorious and exciting Sabbath afternoon for members of the Lee Valley church in North London, but also a joy for tens of visitors, mainly friends and relations of twenty-four new believers who had turned their backs on the world and decided to take up the cross of the Saviour. These were the firstfruits of a well-attended evangelistic campaign, the first ever by the church since its organisation in October 2006.

The four-week campaign had attracted unprecedented attendance at the young church, but the atmosphere on the Sabbath when the baptism took place was described by members as unparalleled in terms of attendance, preparation, worship and a powerful and inspirational sermon which propelled many from the congregation to respond to an altar call.

The campaign, under the theme, 'The Power of his Word', was conducted by a Ghanaian international evangelist, Dr Paul Adu Sampah. The four-week event was attended by over 200 visitors. Sixty of them have

already begun a Bible study programme with the church. The baptism was witnessed by hundreds of people from other sister churches in London, especially the London Ghana Adventist church, out of which the Lee Valley church was born.

Joy could be seen in the faces of all present, especially at the time when it was announced that eight out of the twenty-four candidates were from two different families. Mr Emmanuel Kwarteng and his wife Theresa, together with their two lovely children, Derick and Marcus, 'died and rose' with Christ on that day.

Gifty Nelson and her three children, Jocelyn, Sandra and Theo, formed the other family who were baptised on the day.

One after the other, each candidate walked solemnly into the baptismal pool as the large congregation sang their favourite hymn. Mercy Opoku-Agyeman, the first female candidate to be baptised, observed that though it had been a struggle to follow her husband who had been



baptised into fellowship about a year ago, the invitation to accept the Lord's call was so intense nothing could stop her from being baptised.

Many were thrilled when, in a display of oneness, solidarity and co-operation, Dr Adu Sampah, who had been at the edge of the pool watching proceedings and joyfully welcoming each newly-baptised member, changed into a baptismal robe and joined Pastor Fergus

Owusu-Boateng in the water. Relatives and friends of the new members could not wait, and even before the new Adventists came out from the dressing-room, well-wishers had already filed out to present flowers.

In a short interview, Pastor Owusu-Boateng said the campaign was a huge success and the church would make it an annual affair to win more souls for the Kingdom.

Tottenham and Edmonton: 24 baptised

by Roger Charles

The Tottenham and Edmonton Central churches share the same minister: Pastor David Burnett. They joined forces for a joint 'Now is the time' evangelistic campaign. 'God is working through these churches to bring off a miracle when the adversary is working his hardest,' said Pastor Burnett.

The campaign began on Sabbath 3 May with guest speaker Dr Richard de Lisser, SEC Communication director. His sermon theme was the credit crunch.

Pastor David Burnett took centre stage for a series of sermons. We were blessed by the saxophone sounds of Mark Bunney and the soothing melodies of his wife LaDonna Kezia. Both congregations provided superb music of their own made by Leah, Neville Irish, Kelly and Natasha Hunter, and many more.

Two further speakers flew in specially from Trinidad: Roger Morris and Roger Duncan. They took the campaign venue from the Tottenham church to The Zone above Edmonton Shopping Market Hall.

Nevertheless the Tottenham church was again the venue for the two baptisms in which ten were baptised.

On 7 June the campaign came to an end when a further fourteen were baptised.

Friends and families of the twenty-four candidates were invited to a gala dinner for the friends and families of the new members.

During the five-week campaign over forty others completed the campaign response cards. Preparations are being made by head elder Orville Baxter for each to receive Bible studies.



Welsh Mission trip to Romania

It's amazing what can happen when you are taken out of your comfort zone. The twenty volunteers who went to work at an orphanage in Romania all experienced things that had a great impact on them. Firstly, all of the volunteers, most of whom were new to each other, quickly showed a willingness to work together, and met each challenge that came with determination and an impressive spirit of love and unity. We all shared a house which was across the road from the ICC Romania Project. This is a project which provides

a stable environment for orphaned or abandoned children, and which also aims to make a difference in the community in which it is based.

To help them develop their project there, our volunteers spent just under two weeks working in the hot summer sun, clearing a building site for a new bakery that ICC plan to open. We also learnt a lesson about how far removed we are in the UK from the food chain, as we spent 2-3 days harvesting potatoes in the fields surrounding the project. It certainly is different from just going

down to the local supermarket, and it gave us all a taste of what life is like for many who need to do this to survive.

And we were also able to spend time interacting with the children. These children, ranging in age from 5 to 13 years, were loving and open, and quickly attached themselves to our volunteers. They wanted to borrow our cameras and take pictures of us and the other children, and loved having piggy-back races! We all grew fond of them and it was hard to say goodbye to them.

As well as working at the project, there were also visits to the local community and hospital. As we visited families and mothers with new babies, we gave them gifts of clothes and toiletries and so on, gifts that were donated by the volunteers themselves and their churches.

Throughout the time we were there, we took time each morning and evening to spend with our Creator God, and in song and prayer we were touched and inspired by him, by his love and care for each of us. As a group leader it is my prayer that our time in Romania will be not just a collection of memories, but an experience that will open up new possibilities for each of us to understand God's grace and how he can work through us.

JEREMY TREMEER



Saralinn's baptism

On Sabbath 26 July Saralinn Frazer was baptised in the Rhyl church by Pastor Geoff Dennis. Witnessing the event were her mother Sandra and grandmother Edith; three aunts – Maureen, Edith and Yvonne; her three sisters – Anita-Zelina, Carina and Sharlene Heidi; and her uncle, Villy. Although it is not usually surprising to have many family members present at a baptism, in this case three had come from Norway and two had travelled all the way from California to help make Saralinn's day special.

Another key person at the baptism was Malcolm Turner, elder of the Rhyl church. Back in the late 1960s when he was a Newbold student, Malcolm gave Bible studies to Sandra and Edith Frazer – Saralinn's mother and aunt respectively – at the farm manager's home where the family lived. They were subsequently baptised by Pastor W. Frazer. Many years later, and now living in Rhyl, Sandra invited Malcolm to study with her daughter Anita-Zelina, and she was baptised by Pastor Geoff Dennis in 2005. After witnessing her sister's baptism, Saralinn made no secret of the fact that she, too, wanted to be baptised, and once

again Malcolm Turner was invited to conduct the Bible studies. These studies culminated in Saralinn's baptism, which Malcolm shared in by assisting Pastor Geoff Dennis in the baptismal pool.

In his sermon Welsh Mission president Pastor John Surridge spoke of the wonderful celebration there is, both on Earth and in Heaven, when someone makes a commitment to Jesus. In the case of Saralinn, whose positive attitude, infectious happiness and zest for life make her a joy to know, this is especially true.

JOHN SURRIDGE



Saralinn Frazer and her sister Anita-Zelina

Daly reports from Olympics

We can't all compete in the Olympics, but Bristol pastor, Richard Daly, loves the atmosphere so much that he flew to Beijing on 12 August.

'I have been to the last two Olympics, where I volunteered as a chaplain,' said Richard. 'This time around I was trying to go as a chaplain but none were taken on from overseas, so I thought I would try a different tack.' Richard is known for his writing for various newspaper columns. He applied to the British Olympic Association Media Department as a freelance on the off chance, showed them some of his work and what he planned to cover, and got accreditation.

Richard is taking a personal holiday to enjoy the event during which he plans to write articles on Christian athletes and he will also be recording interviews for the likes of Premier Radio.

How does this fit in with his regular ministry? 'I plan to report on the church in China,' he says. He hopes to attend the 1,000-member Adventist church in Beijing and gain a picture of what the church there is like.

VICTOR HULBERT

Evangelism and baptism in Preston

Preston church experienced a true revival at their evangelistic campaign which took place during the week of 24-31 May when Pastor James Yansen came to stay. It was evident that the Holy Spirit was working through him, because when this young pastor spoke he commanded attention straight away.

'In Times Like These' was the topic for the week. The messages centred around the book of Jeremiah. It was relevant to the people then and is also applicable to us in post-modern Britain.

During the course of the week, five candidates had their names down for the baptism which was to take place on the Sabbath (31 July), but as a direct result of the successful campaign, a couple of days before the baptism four more people joined that list. The Holy Spirit was working among his people and hearts were touched and moved into making a commitment to surrender their lives in service to God.

Among the candidates were four teenagers – Jefred Dalmeida, Prince Mitti, Camara Clarke and Jasmin Toussaint. Jasmine said, 'It was through my Grandma's influence that I decided to make my commitment to God by being baptised. She has played an important role in my life.'

Other candidates were husband and wife Anita and Arthur Chiumia who were born in Malawi. Arthur was born into an Adventist family and his grandfather was a pastor. Anita joined the faith in 1995. After attending two of the campaign meetings, Anita said, 'We felt that we had

let the Lord down and decided to rededicate our lives to Jesus by being baptised together.'

Osborne Stewart was also born into an Adventist family and, as a child, was dedicated in the church. Unlike his brothers and sisters, he had not yet made his decision to be baptised until he took a series of Bible studies. Although he could not attend the campaign, he decided to make a commitment to God.

Shupikai Maposa was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, and her husband Dingilizwe Ncube, in Bulawayo. The couple have been living in the UK for more than six years. Dingilizwe was introduced to Adventism through his sisters who have always been Adventists. In turn he introduced Shupikai to the faith. The couple were invited to the evangelistic campaign and both made the decision to be baptised.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Preston children: 'Living for Jesus'

'Let the World Know' was the theme for the day on Sabbath 5 July when the children's Sabbath School hosted the programmes for the entire day. Rather than a sit-and-listen approach, the congregation was encouraged to participate as the Sabbath School programme was interactive. The children learned that there are many ways to witness and that it is not reserved for older people but you can start when you are young.

'The Servant Child', 'Children

who are Faithful' and 'Children of Worth and Influence' were the three sermonettes ably presented by members of the Powerpoint class, Sadia Deen, Nomsa Mpofu and Tino Sakarombe. They explained that children have a role to play in our communities and that they rely on their parents, grandparents and elders to teach them the way of the Lord.

AYS took on the form of a play based on the story of *The Mouse's Tale* where little mouse tries to witness to all her animal friends and no one wants to listen. The children thoroughly enjoyed acting their parts which illustrated that witnessing is not always easy, but all God asks is that we do our part.

Everyone enjoyed the day and, although humorous in parts, the clear message was that we need to live for Jesus in our community and be good ambassadors for him.

One adult commented, 'It was unique, informative and enjoyable – children presenting a programme from their perspective, and not children behaving like adults.'

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Tottenham: 'Every child matters'

Sabbath 26 April was Education Day at Tottenham church and it was jam-packed with events organised by Marsha Mills and her team of young people. The theme for the day was 'Why Educate?' During Sabbath School there was a presentation by Opal Johnson-Christie of Holloway church, which made us aware of a government initiative called 'Every child matters' and the impact this would have on our children. Special music was by Blessed, a group of children from Brixton church, who also sang during divine service.

Pastor Clive de Silva delivered the sermon. The young people were reminded that education does not end when you leave school. Education should be for eternity, not just for this world. He stated that the world and the Church had different outlooks, and he compared education to a tree. The world measures your success by how you climb the ladder. However, Jesus measures your success by your fruits. If there are no fruits, no matter how successful you are by the world's standards, you have failed. Also, he pointed out that trees bear fruit in different seasons, so he advised not to watch the other person because

you will have your season. Another enemy that Pastor de Silva warned us against was negativity. Never say to yourself, 'This is what is going to happen, so let me lie back and let it happen.'

Immediately after divine service was a prayer and fasting programme. Special prayers were said for John Loughborough School, those taking exams, and for the joint evangelistic programme with Tottenham and Edmonton Central from 3 May to 7 June. There were three presentations. One led by V. Johnson, the other by a group of young people – Sanchez, Vicky, Amrik and Miranda – and the final one by M. Donovan.

The day ended with an evening of music and praise, a revival service for the upcoming evangelistic campaign. Those who participated included a singing evangelist from Jamaica, Alafia Maxwell of the London Adventist Chorale, and Janice Weir-Gemina. Michael Osei made a special presentation to close the service and to prepare us for the evangelistic campaign starting the following Sabbath.

MAXINE DONOVAN

Newbold school takes church service

On Saturday 21 June, Newbold Primary School took the early and family service at Newbold church. Children from each class took part – Foundation One (3-4-year-olds) to Years 5 and 6 (9-11-year-old children).

The sermon was delivered by our head teacher, Mrs Victoria Chilvers, and was about the body of Christ. Although each part of our body is different, it is co-ordinated to work well together. Without just one part, the body may not function properly. This is like our school and church; even though there are so many different cultures and nationalities, we are one.

The most moving part of the service was when we all sang 'Praise the Lord together'. The song was performed in English, Russian, Dutch, French, Danish, Igbo and Croatian. It demonstrated that, although we are different, we can all work together.

The song was so touching it brought tears to people's eyes.

We all enjoyed taking part and hope our message was spread.

SILVIA and LUKA, 10 years old

Darlington's youth have big plans for the community

by Sarah Kipling

'What would *you* like to see from your local church in the community?'

This unabashedly forthright question was put to countless Darlington locals on 26 July by children and young people, with those as young as 5 and those as grown-up as 18 combining their ideas and faith together to help improve the local community.

Darlington church's Youth Evangelism Day and Prayer Walk, held on 26 July, was a modestly impressive affair, run entirely by the church's children, who had been practising for four weeks in the run-up and for six hours the night before. The children set out to preach to their congregation, as well as to entertain (with a handmade puppet show, inspirational songs and a children's story – told by children) and interact with people from all walks of life, getting to the crux of real people's thoughts and concerns.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, that the questions went straight to the heart of the matter. And it would seem that this is a winning

formula, since various locals voiced their concerns openly, without fear of censure or disapproval. 'I'd like a place that my grandson would be able to go to keep out of trouble,' said one concerned grandmother, while, on the opposite end of the spectrum, a young mother expressed her desire for 'a place my two sons can go, to participate in singing, nativities and group activities'. Two different people, two strikingly similar yet simple wishes.

Some locals even warmed to the idea of being prayed for by the children and congregation.

It is most likely that this unusually personal, determined and frank approach to people and relationships is one of the contributing factors of Darlington church's amazing

recovery. After dwindling funds and members forced this endearing group of people (with fewer than ten members at the worst of times) to relocate from their traditional church (which was, astonishingly, converted into Bathroom World), the Adventists started again from scratch in a smaller, more humble building.

And Youth Evangelism Day, it would appear, is just the tip of the iceberg. The youth group is already taking on board local ideas. 'We plan to volunteer at elderly care homes and raise funds for other projects, such as a mothers' and toddlers' club, a teens' community football team, youth Bible Q&A drop-in sessions, a soup kitchen for the most needy, a sponsored 10km hike near High Force in late September,' reels off Leyan Ham-ying, who encouraged and guided the children

with the day, without any apparent hint of fatigue.

On Youth Evangelism Day more than fifty people came to the church from all kinds of different backgrounds – Jamaican, Nigerian, Polish, Filipino, Malawian, English. And, evidently, this all-embracing outlook has influenced its younger members. Lupi Mwanjoka, 15, told me, 'No matter where people are, we should go out and talk to them – and not just those that are easy to talk to. It's especially those that need help.'

Leyan Ham-ying echoed these sentiments, saying, 'It's important to keep an open mind – with no pre-conceived ideas about people when you talk to them.' This made an altogether refreshing break from narrow-minded, judgemental church stereotypes. Significantly, the youth group is open to Christians and non-Christians alike, and Leyan points out that the day is a reminder to Christians of all denominations, good citizens, and people of all ages, that we all have a responsibility to the local community. Most interestingly of all, it is the youth of Darlington setting this example.

Balham's reunion weekend recalled

What a time we had at the reunion weekend on 27-29 July 2007 at the Balham church. They came from all over England, Holland, Canada, USA and the Caribbean. They came to meet, greet and to fellowship with loved ones and friends whom they had not seen for a number of years. However, more importantly, they came to give all the praise and thanks to God our Father.

The Friday evening praise and worship was led by Pastor Halsey Peat and Balham church's praise team, while Nylann Kennedy and Leslene Peat-Brown took us on the journey (the history of the Balham church) which was to last throughout the weekend.

The Sabbath School discussion was led by Valerie Bernard and a panel. The Sabbath School ended with Sylvia Bernard's testimony of how God prepared and led her into the Sabbath truth.

The Croydon and Balham gospel choirs and praise teams led us into the family service and into the very presence of our Father, and Heaven certainly came down and glory filled our hearts as Olivia and her group gave praise to God in the song, 'Total Praise'. This was the inspiration that Pastor Errol Lawrence needed as he took us to the feet of Christ. 'Don't give up now,' he admonished us, because Jesus is soon to come. 'Where shall we meet?' he asked. 'Meet me by the Tree of Life.' The congregation chorused 'Amen' as we promised to meet him there.

When the weekend finally came to its close we were still praising God.

The whole weekend has been captured on an eight-disk DVD which can be purchased at a cost of £25 (includes packaging and postage). Ring Leslene Peat-Brown on 020 87153268 or email lizzy_peat@hotmail.co.uk for your copy.

A book is currently being written on the history of the Balham church which will be available in the not too distant future.

LESLENE PEAT-BROWN



Help in the credit crunch

Debt is an ever-increasing problem that affects the lives of many at some time or another. Experts predict that we are heading into a recession and that the problem will only get worse. Recognising that people in debt or struggling on benefits often feel very alone and need help and assistance to relieve the pressure, The Watering Hole wanted to do something about it.

In several chapters of Deuteronomy and Leviticus God's people are instructed in ways to make life easier for people struggling with debt. When Jesus walked the Earth, his presence, his teaching and miracles brought hope and healing to many. In 2008 there are still people who are prisoners of the evil one who need the help that the Church working in Jesus' name can

bring. We have a work to do that affects lives now and for eternity.

The Watering Hole, a church plant in Hampshire, decided to partner with The Frontline Project and train volunteer advisors to provide debt and benefit advice. The Frontline Project has been providing such advice across the south since it was founded on the Isle of Wight twenty years ago.

The debt centre provides free, independent, confidential and competent advice to anyone needing

help regarding their financial situation. Genuinely caring and working for the good of the community has made a big impression on local people. Some have already offered their help in various ways, others now invite their friends to come to things that they enjoy, and local government agencies are starting to work with the church plant so that, together, we can make a difference.

ROSEMARY LETHBRIDGE



a time of refreshment for married and engaged couples

26-28 september 2008

newbold college, bracknell

contact sec family ministries for an information pack

tel. 01923 232728
email: fm@secadventist.org.uk

or go to www.secadventist.org > events for more information and application form

Newbold members should contact the church secretary on 01344 401792 or email: mm@newboldchurch.org



FEEDBACK

Dear Editor,

DR A. H. WILLIAMS:

I really enjoyed your article in the 20 June *Messenger* on Celebrating the San.

I arrived in the UK from what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in January 1962. After landing in Southampton, I made my way to Watford by train and bus. I knew I needed to go to Stanborough Park to see Pastor A. W. Howard, the Publishing secretary for the BUC, and also to go to the Stanborough Press for my first supply of books. It was my intention to earn my way through Newbold College.

To cut a long story short, I arrived at Stanborough Park at lunchtime. The office being closed, I started walking towards the Press buildings when a vehicle drew up and a gentleman, who I learned was Dr Williams, said to me, 'What are you doing, young man?' Upon hearing my explanation, he immediately said, 'Everything's closed for lunch. Hop in and we'll go and eat lunch.'

I will never forget this gesture of kindness and hospitality; both Dr and Mrs Williams were perfect hosts. If only

we could have more people like them today and Abraham of old, I am sure many a young and older person would find their way to the Kingdom.

W. MERVYN MASON

The Williams family

The Editor is very grateful for all the positive feedback on the 'commemorating the San' historical feature published on 20 June 2008.

There have been enquiries with regard to the daughters of the late Dr A. H. Williams. Dr Leslie Williams, who lives in retirement in Gwent, confirms that his three sisters – Nina, Naomi and Lorna – all became nurses and midwives. Nina served with the World Health Organisation in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Levant. Naomi gave up her nursing career at University College Hospital, London, and, like her father, became a mature student and studied dentistry. She was awarded the MBE for services to nursing and dentistry in 1980. Lorna, the only sister to marry, remained with the NHS as sister-in-charge of a department.

There have also been enquiries with regard to Dr Hugh Williams. Dr Leslie Williams provides the following account:

'Following his resignation from the San and the BUC in 1968 [Dr Hugh Williams] was appointed a Hospital Practitioner in Obstetrics (a number of my secretaries met him in this capacity) at the Watford General Hospital. He also was a member of The Hertfordshire Family Practitioners Committee and at the time of his retirement, and for some time before, was the chairman of that committee. Like his father, the medical fraternity of Southwest Hertfordshire also appointed him for a term of office as their president. Hugh died at his home in Abergavenny on 17 October 2001.

'To the family members known to you, I add the name of John C. Williams, my eldest brother. After the last war (served as a Captain in the Royal Artillery in India) he became a mature student and studied dentistry. After qualifying, he opened his own practice in Bushey. Many people from Stanborough Park and its environs were on his list and he was well known on Stanborough Park. Later he became the Regional Dental Officer for East Anglia and retired from that post to Verwood in Dorset. He died on 5 January 1997 at the Nuffield Hospital in Bournemouth.'

Corrigendum

Messenger 18 July, page 12

I apologise to Miss Beulah Plunkett for inadvertently omitting her appointment as North England Conference Sabbath School director. Beulah has been a member of the British Union Conference Executive committee for some time and is a senior lecturer at one of the universities in Birmingham.

EDITOR

Teaching positions in New Zealand (two positions)

Longburn Adventist College in New Zealand, a state-integrated secondary school operated by the Adventist Church, seeks two teachers. A combination of senior science (chemistry and/or physics) and senior mathematics is available. Head of department duties can be negotiated with suitably experienced teachers.

The college is set in a rural environment close to a major town. Help with relocation expenses is available. A willingness and ability to take part in the special character of the college is a prerequisite to appointment. For an information pack please contact principal@lac.school.nz.

ABC BOOK SALES

PRESS OPEN DAY
Sunday 7 September

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Watford BUC, 1st & 3rd Sunday 10am-2pm

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Sunset

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	London	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Aug 29	7.53	8.05	8.00	8.14	8.22
Sep 5	7.37	7.50	7.43	7.56	8.05
12	7.21	7.34	7.27	7.38	7.47
19	7.05	7.17	7.10	7.19	7.29

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